



# HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

An electronic newsletter in support of public safety services in Montana  
VOLUME 7 • ISSUE 26 • July 1, 2011



## PSSB Weekly Highlights

- The Richland County Public Safety Communications System Manager position is posted on the Sidney Job Service site at this link: <http://wsd.dli.mt.gov/local/sidney/>. Starting salary is \$64,000 plus benefits. Closes on July 15.
- PSSB staff are assisting with the transfer of IM grant responsibilities by filling out DES grant re-obligation application forms and processing Equipment Transfer documentation.

## IM Project Directors Hold Final Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner [espooner@mt.gov](mailto:espooner@mt.gov)

Members expressed their gratitude to everyone involved with the Interoperability Montana (IM) Project at their last official board meeting held via webinar on Tues., June 28 at 9:00 am. The Governor's Deputy Chief of Staff, Sheena Wilson, conveyed the Governor's appreciation for the effort that has been put into the statewide radio project.

Members reviewed the remaining budget and noted that the IM shortfall had been reduced substantially to about \$3,400. The Public Safety Services Bureau (PSSB) has some contingency monies that may be used to cover the shortfall or other unforeseen debts.

Kevin Bruski reported on the grant de-obligation process and reviewed plans for grant re-obligation. As soon as these are finalized, the HAM will update you on their status. Two purchase orders were recently issued: one for a climb ladder at the Government Hill site and the other for engineering and a microwave hop from Colburn to the Northeast Billings site. PSSB will take over stewardship of these until the grants are re-obligated.

IM Legal Counsel Bob Murdo reported on the dissolution plan and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between DES and the IM. A final notification of dissolution will be filed with the Secretary of State. Appropriate IRS tax forms also will be filed. After June 30, all legal questions should be referred to Bob Murdo.

Dave McPherson, I-15/90 Project Director, reported that the required FY2011 fiscal audit will be

underway shortly. It is expected to be completed by the end of July.

IM Executive Director Kevin Bruski specifically thanked Glendive Police Chief Alan Michaels for his tireless dedication and commitment to his position as the IM Project Directors (IMPD) board chair. The consensus was that it has been an honor to work with everyone involved with the IM Project.



Glendive Police Chief Michaels inspects the propane tank at the new Belle Prairie site in Dawson County that was recently completed.

(Photo by Brian Sewell, PE • [www.bsee.us](http://www.bsee.us))

## Printed 2011 Mutual Aid Manuals Available

By E. Wing Spooner [espooner@mt.gov](mailto:espooner@mt.gov)

Printed copies of the 2011 *Mutual Aid and Common Frequencies Manual* are now available from the Public Safety Services Bureau (PSSB). For the past few months, the online version has been available for download at: [http://pssb.mt.gov/mutual\\_aid\\_manual.mcp.x](http://pssb.mt.gov/mutual_aid_manual.mcp.x).

Several new resources were added to enhance mutual aid communications for Montana's response community. New additions/changes include the following:

- Three new narrowband-only fire tactical frequencies are available for permitting and use: **COPPER** (154.2725 MHz), **BURGUNDY** (154.2875 MHz) and **CRIMSON** (154.3025 MHz).
- A new General Use Simplex Frequency, **NEON** (157.4250 MHz), has been acquired. Some restrictions on its use exist in northern counties.
- **TAN** (155.3400 MHz) has been newly designated as a statewide Air-to-Ground

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coordination frequency. Secondary uses of this frequency are for Hospital-to-Hospital and Hospital-to-Ambulance communications or for EMS interagency communications at an incident scene.

In addition, digital encrypted tactical operations (with a regional operating plan) are now allowed on the **BLACK** law enforcement channel. Receiver tone control (156.7 Hz) for **BLUE** and **SILVER** will take effect October 1, 2011. The manual also announces that all mutual aid frequencies in Montana must operate narrowband by October 1, 2012.

PSSB is grateful to the individuals who provided assistance in the final compilation of the 2011 manual. These folks represented law enforcement, fire services, EMS, Disaster and Emergency Services (DES), Search and Rescue Organizations, and amateur radio. A huge thank you goes out to them once again. We at PSSB are committed to supporting to the Montana response community with tools such as the Montana Mutual Aid and Common Frequencies Manual. Plans are to distribute them via DES District Representatives, at Consortium meetings, and at the APCO Conference in Oct. To order copies, please e-mail [pssbinfo@mt.gov](mailto:pssbinfo@mt.gov).

## Narrowband Repeater and Base Station Grant Update

By E. Wing Spooner [espooner@mt.gov](mailto:espooner@mt.gov)

Last Feb., the IM Project announced a funding opportunity to help local, state and tribal government agencies in Montana replace wideband radio repeaters and/or base stations with narrowband ones. Nearly 40 different agencies and jurisdictions applied for the equipment, which was to be funded from two different sources of grant money.

Approximately \$160,000 of funding came from a re-allocation of remaining Dept. of Homeland Security (DHS) FY07 grant monies, which had to be spent immediately. An estimated \$700,000 of DHS FY10 grant dollars also were allocated to fund narrowband repeaters and base stations, but they have not yet been released by DES. These funds are expected to be re-obligated sometime later this year to the remaining jurisdictions whose applications were recommended for funding by the IM Technical Committee.

Some jurisdictions were not funded from the FY07 grant monies because the structures into which the equipment was being installed were more than 50 years old, which requires a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) application. Given that the process of preparing and receiving approval on NEPA applications is time consuming, it was decided to fund those projects from FY10 grant monies.

Priority was given to those jurisdictions that have not previously benefitted from IM support. Eight jurisdictions will be receiving narrowband equipment next week as a result of this initiative, as follows:

- Anaconda-Deer Lodge: A Motorola Quantar for Rumsey Mountain.
- Carbon County: Two Motorola Quantars for Red Lodge and Bridger sites.
- Charlo-Moiese Rural Fire Dept.: A base station for its fire hall in Lake County.
- Fallon County: A Motorola Quantar for the Fallon County Shop Building as well as a base station for its dispatch center.
- Granite County: A Motorola Quantar for Rumsey Mountain.
- Judith-Basin County: A Motorola Quantar for its Antelope Butte site.
- Prairie County: A Motorola Quantar for the Sheep Mountain site and a Kenwood repeater for its Fallon site.
- Ravalli County: A Motorola Quantar for the Sula site.

This was an equipment-only grant. Installation of the equipment is the responsibility of the receiving agency. No other match was required. The HAM will keep you posted on the results of the next round of narrowband equipment distribution.

## Upcoming Meetings

- **Thurs., July 21**  
**I-15/90 Consortium**  
Butte • 10:00 am - noon  
Butte Chamber of Commerce, 1000 George St.
- **Tues., July 26**  
**State Agency Radio Users Task Force**  
Helena • 9:30-11:00 am  
Mitchell Building, 125 S. Roberts, Rm. 223
- **Thurs., July 28**  
**Big Sky 11 Consortium**  
Billings • 10:00 am - noon  
Yellowstone Co. EOC/Fire Station, 2305 8th Ave. N.

